

given her, lies a dread that her own internal organs of reproduction, indeed the whole of the inside of the body, will be injured and destroyed. The inside of the body is naturally more significant for the girl than for the boy. So long as the boy can reassure himself by the actual presence of his real penis, he can feel safe and content. The girl has not this reassurance, and it is less easy for her to secure herself against the anxieties attaching to the phantasy that the inside of her body may have been spoilt or injured, or altogether destroyed.

If one asks what these castration fears (using the term to cover all this complex of anxiety) spring from, the answer is manifold. They spring from a variety of sources in the mental life of the child, many of them inherent and inescapable. They undoubtedly rise quite spontaneously, although, of course, they are reinforced, and may be overstimulated until they become pathogenic, by actual threats from adults or other children. These threats do in fact occur, even from responsible grown-ups, more often than many people realise. Many children are threatened with castration, or an equivalent disease, because of bed-wetting, masturbation, or exhibitionism, and this may happen either with little children or with adolescents. "A policeman will come and cut it off if you do that" is sometimes said to little children. An adult patient of mine was told by his father, when he was fourteen, that if he masturbated "it would be necessary to send for the doctor, and an operation would have to be performed which would prevent him from ever being able to have children of his own/

Such threats are obviously overwhelmingly terrifying to children of any age ; but they are not essential stimuli to castration dread. This undoubtedly occurs in

every child,
and may become quite acute even in those
children who have
not experienced such open threats. They arise
partly from
the child's internal psychic processes, and
partly from in-
evitable real experiences. As to the latter,
every little
child suffers minor real injuries of some sort or
hurts to the
projecting parts of the body—a cut on the finger
or knee, the
loss of a tooth, having his hair cut off, etc.
Every child
also feels an actual sense of loss in the anal
situation. With
a certain pressure of faeces on the rectal
muscles, the child
experiences actual pleasure, but when the
faeces pass out,
he loses this pleasure, and loses the faeces
themselves, which
have been a part of his body. His unwillingness
to experience